

Somerville Climate Forward
Health & Wellbeing Working Group Meeting
May 8, 2018

Attendance

- Rachel Weil
- Jen Lawrence
- Lisa Brukilacchio
- Jess Bloomer
- Erin Wnorowski
- Doug Kress, City of Somerville
- Hannah Payne, City of Somerville

Feedback on Solution #12

- Food resilience is missing from both solutions.
- Easy to say, hard to do. Implementation partners that are listed are the ones we always turn to, but there are other communities in Somerville that we need to reach, so we need think differently if we are going to reach a larger percentage of the population. Not everyone is comfortable interacting with government.
- City has existing cooling centers at Council on Aging, schools, 165 Broadway, and police station. Should reach out to the VNA as well to establish partnership. Need to look at facilities that city can use as shelters and understand which buildings have backup generators and how long are they could be available. What fuels do we need and how will those get there during an emergency?
 - Haven't had to open up shelter for winter storms in years. Have had to open up police station as shelters when there have been fires in residential buildings.
 - In 2004 – shut down city (including transportation) for 4-5 days because of blizzard. So much snow you couldn't get around City. Changed City' snow policies.
 - In the winter HHS is on call and ready for opening a shelter in case of power outage. HHS purchased additional beds to make 25 bed shelter at Cross St Senior Center.
 - During the summer, Council on Aging stays open until 6pm.
- Who needs to be involved
 - Schools weren't explicitly on list and need to be. Call out special education explicitly because those students may have additional needs.
 - Fire department and HHS are working on vulnerable population plan in case of evacuation. Beginning list through self-reporting and with info from energy partners (no shut offs). Would be a good place to start for alert system.
 - Child Care centers
 - Homeless & domestic violence shelters (even if they are outside of Somerville). Put together short questionnaire to ask what they are already doing during extreme weather. Homeless coalition has a certain number of beds with waitlist & can't bring in extra people because of fire code, but may extend hours during extreme weather.
 - Somerville has limited homeless population (typically less than 10 consistently unsheltered homeless residents). Police will do checks on them when it is hot and cold.
 - VNA and Somerville/Cambridge Elder Services are already have list of homebound seniors and do home checks.

- Need to be careful not to make full implementation plan without asking partner organizations what works for them first – especially non-climate and non-city entities. Should get MOUs with partner organizations if we are relying on their help, services, or facilities during an emergency.
- Worth thinking about registration points – when people come into a system (head start, parent center, etc.) and how can you share information at that point? Income eligible programs, parking permits, etc. Good opportunity to give educational materials (don't use wonky language) and ask if they would like to receive extreme weather condition alerts. Texts for opt in and reverse 311.
 - Many immigrants are more responses to text messages than emails. Make sure organizations that have networks or members sign up for alerts.
- Disaster Hubs – Are there point people at these hubs all the time? Somerville isn't that big. Need to fit solution into what is already happening. Focus first on existing places where people gather already. Need a response at the neighborhood level. When would they be activated?
 - Emergency sites that have been designated – East Somerville and Kennedy – both have backup generators.
 - Hubs/ emergency centers should have some cold storage & up to code food storage and kitchens.
 - Cooling centers need entertainment and activities – more important than we think. Stress reduction is key. Volunteers might be interested in stepping into role to provide entertainment or activities.
- Need to organize the people to be organized to respond and make sure there is infrastructure to support it.
- Partner with Cambridge and Medford on this.
- Need consistent brand that people can recognize. Create visual symbol that could be posted at sites to remind people of locations that will be open during an emergency. Use same visual brand with all outreach.
- Include it in ResiStat, emergency preparedness week, SustainaVille Week, SomerStreets, and other ongoing outreach events. Tag onto what is already existing
- Need to go to community to learn about experiences dealing with heat to be able to better identify solutions.
- Alerts need to come from community – not just the City. Use virtual teams/ phone tree system to reach more people.
- Create a check-on-a-neighbor program to accompany this.
- Vector borne diseases – Do we need to alerts about this too? MWRA has messaging on this.

#13 – Preparedness Coalitions

- Who needs to be involved?
 - Schools & Somerville Family Learning Collaborative - Participate in pop-up workshops in the beginning of school, working through school liaisons and setting up activities to raise awareness and share info.
 - Playgroups – 700+ families – Good way to begin building community network infrastructure.
- #13 is the mechanism to achieve #12 and to get more people signed up. Branding is super important—even climate conscious people wouldn't necessarily be on a “climate coalition”. Shouldn't be branded as “climate.”
 - Block parties – tie into aldermen block parties.
 - People need to find it in a fun way and hear about it from multiple channels.
- Benefit: Improving apartments. Campaign could provide basic information on cheap or free changes to improve energy efficiency and heat and flood protection.

- Climate Coalition of Somerville – could be activated to assist with this. Adopt a neighborhood and provide volunteer technical assistance. Give climate groups and advocacy groups something to do together. Annual campaign to bring neighborhoods and orgs together.
- Is there a way to have a space on City website to highlight what each community group is working on? – Can the city give space to other groups or link to who else is working on these issues?
- Host summit to train people to conduct specific outreach—give them t-shirt and talking points.
 - Fossil Free Somerville – Have done door knocking about CCE and would likely be interested in sharing other messages/programs.
- Climate preparedness –Are there ways to measure this? Is it a pledge? Or number of things distributed?
 - School pledge – get kids to engage their parents and combine with something educational behind it – awareness or prevention week.
- Give stipends to community champions or gift certificates. Or do something and be eligible to win something.
- Utilize youth teams to door knock and do outreach. What has worked is having youth learn about something through a job and or during school day and bringing it home to parents.
 - Backpack program – sends kids home with food could put things in there? Public private partnership.
- Page 8 – healthcare funds program is being changed at state level – write-up should reflect current situation – Lawrence example doesn't work under new rules.
- Implementation – needs to say tie it into what people do on an everyday basis (laundromat, schools, etc.).
- Partners – SomerViva, Teen Empowerment, Groundwork, Welcome Project, Somerville Family learning coalition, Council on Aging, Somerville Homeless Coalition,
 - Outdoor workers – DPW and Rec department during summer – look internally
 - Somerville Media Center can help create PSAs in many languages. They should be listed as a partner.
 - Listserve are really helpful – youth listserve, food listeserves etc.